

# NOTES FROM THE EDGE

BY ERIK JENSEN

+INNER VIEW+

**KEN DELANEY AND JOE SWEET  
OF NINEBALL**



Nineball - Photo by Matt Ossowski

In the early to mid nineties, grunge and alternative metal ruled the airwaves! In up-state New York, there were definitely some bands that were catching the attention of the recording industry. The movement was on! Utica was the home of Nineball! They were one of the bands that you went to see and envisioned playing to a much larger national audience. The band was aggressive, progressive, lyrically and vocally so far beyond

their peers, that I still have a tough time not believing that they were not on the national stage. Towards the end of the nineties, the band called it quits and left a bevy of fans upset and hungering for more. Well, close to fifteen years later, they will get their wish! After playing the clubs for the past year, Nineball is set to release their new CD! Quite simply, it is a monster of energy! I was able to catch up with Ken Delaney and Joe Sweet recently to get the scoop on all things Nineball!

**Erik Jensen:** *How did Nineball come together as a group in the early 90's?*

**Ken Delaney:** Nineball was the vision of Joe and Scott. They had put together the original version of what we call 9 Ball in the early 90's. They played a lot of shows in the area and picked up a large following at the time. Joe and Scott decided that they wanted the band to go in a different direction musically and parted ways with their guitar player and drummer at the time. Joe had his mind set on one guitar player Jay Wiley to fill the spot and Scott had suggested that Joe get in touch with me to fill the drummer position. We clicked instantly and began writing song after song.

**EJ:** *When a band is gaining the momentum you were as a group in the 90's, what made you call it quits back in the day?*

**Joe Sweet:** Back in the 90's there was a lot going on. I'd have to say it was a combination of a few things. For starters, we

were very young and still learning who we are and who we wanted to be. Some of us moved on to have families and explore that side of life. It was very difficult to do both at the time. For me, my outlook on life was changing. I felt like a lot of the questions I was asking were being answered and my music was becoming less aggressive. Plus back then, there was still smoking in all the clubs. That made it very hard on my throat night after night. I thought there was no way it could last if I keep going that route. Performing is a big part of my life and I have to stay healthy in order to do it full time.

**EJ:** *I know that you guys were looking to do different things after the break up of Nineball? How did your other projects come about after Nineball's split?*

**KD:** I think it was a combination of many different things. Some of us went on to other projects and some of us decided to take a break from music all together. Joe decided to pursue a different style of music, and started a great project called Jomamma and the Funkdaddys. I went back to my metal roots, and hooked up with two great musicians to form a band called Duck Duck Goose.

**EJ:** *What made you guys re-connect and decide to put this band back together?*

**KD:** It all started with a text message between Joe and I in October 2009. We were getting a lot of requests, and motivation from friends posting stuff on facebook about how they would like to see a Nineball reunion. During our text conversation we agreed it would be fun to give it a shot and see if we could spark some interest. I figured it would be worth a shot to reach out to Scott, Nineball's original bass player, with a text and see if he would be interested in getting Nineball back together. He responded with a Hell Yeah within seconds. So with three past members of Nineball set to go, the big question was who would we find to play guitar? Both of Nineball's guitar players from the past were in other states, doing other things with life. We tried out a couple of local guitar players that did not fit what we were looking for. In December 2009 Joe suggested that he would reach out to one of the area's most talented guitar players (Dallas Sheppard) and see if he would be interested... Dallas said he would join the group for the reunion show that we had scheduled at The Electric Company on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and within 2 weeks Nineball was rehearsing for the show...

**EJ:** *For me, you guys were an important part of my music seeking youth? I remember my first show was the NORML benefit at Atlantis back in 93 or 94. Did you guys catch any grief from fans and friends to re-unite during the long time apart?*

**KD:** During the 15+ years that we were apart, I know that I was confronted by many old fans, and friends of the band, and I would say that it stands true for all of us. We had a really loyal fan base back in the 90's that never wanted Nineball to part ways when we did. It seemed like every time I ran into someone they would always say Nineball should get back together.

**EJ:** *Obviously, there is a new member that joined the fold. Could you tell me a little about him?*

**KD:** Our guitar player Dallas is the only one in the band that is not a former member of Nineball. Dallas is one of the area's most respected guitar player's. When he joined Nineball, he was in three other bands (Band Whore as we call him). He is without a doubt the best choice we could have made to fill the spot. He has added so much to our sound with his techniques, style and sound.

**EJ:** *Your new CD is due for release in June, can you tell me about the process of putting this album together?*

**KD:** We all decided it was time to record our first album in August 2010. We set a goal of getting in the studio the beginning of 2011. We decided that we would record some old material, along with the new to give this album some history of Nineball. Next was deciding on where we wanted to record the album. It was a clear-cut choice to all of us that we wanted to do this album with Jocko at Moresound studios in Syracuse. Jocko had reached out to us, previously and said he was really interested in working with us on this project. We scheduled 4 days in February and decided that we also wanted Jocko to produce the album. The album was completed in five full studio days, and we worked our asses off to get it done in 5 days. Drum tracks were done in 9 hrs. Bass in 1 and a half days, and guitar, and vocals covered the rest. If anyone knows Jocko, they know how amazing he is at his craft. If you don't know! You need to! We could not be happier with the finished product. We decided to have Brendon Flynn (Jocko's Roommate) do the artwork for the cover after looking at his artwork in the studio.

**EJ:** *This CD is a very cohesive piece of music that soars musically, vocally, and lyrically. Some of it seems quite personal, and even autobiographical in many senses. Can you tell me about the origin of the song's themes?*

**JS:** The older material mostly comes from a part of me that was questioning things. As young adults I think it's very important that we question things. I've questioned everything from Religion to Government just to make sure that I feel that I'm doing the right thing, and that I can make decisions that I can live with for the rest of my life. That's how we get the answers that we are looking for. For example in the song "Enterprise" I was really searching for enlightenment. I knew in my heart that there was something there but just didn't know what yet. So I questioned... because I wanted to know more. It was a burning desire I had as a youngster. The newer material like "Martyr," "Soldier Boy" and "Stand Up" comes from a different perspective. It still has that edge with a touch of anger, but ultimately I'm more confident in my beliefs. Not as much questioning and more reasoning. For example "Soldier Boy" reflects my feelings about our troops still being at war while our government has claimed victory. There has been no victory if we are still at war, like the war on terror or the war on drugs. We still have hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters over seas when they where promised they would come home. We seem to shift the war from one country to the next. They never really come home. My heart goes out to them and I pray for their safe return.

**EJ:** *What can we expect from Nineball this year?*

**KD:** We are releasing our first full length CD and our release

party will be at The Uptown Theatre in Utica on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are already set to start writing material for our next album, and plan on hitting the studio early next year. We are booking a lot of shows throughout central NY to support our CD.

On the web:

[www.reverbnation.com/nineballutica](http://www.reverbnation.com/nineballutica) and  
[www.facebook.com/nineballrocks](http://www.facebook.com/nineballrocks).

[Words by Erik Jensen, Photo by Matt Ossowski]

## + REGIONAL REPORT + MOUNTAIN JAM VII

6/02-05/2011 - HUNTER MOUNTAIN - HUNTER, NY

Radio Woodstock and our favorite Allman, Mr. Warren Haynes (all bow), bring their fantastic festival back to the Catskills for a seventh straight year. The festival, for the first time, will be extended to four days. "It's been great to watch Mountain Jam grow over the last seven years from a one-day concert to a multi-day, destination event," says Haynes. "I'm really looking forward to this year's line-up and to performing with both Gov't Mule and the Warren Haynes Band." Indeed it is a nice little treat for all lovers of groove oriented rock!

As in years past, Govt. Mule will headline the festival once again! If you are a fan of Warren and the boys, check them out here. The boys will only play a couple choice engagements this year. However, you will catch some more Warren magic as the Warren Haynes Band will make their Northeast festival debut on this weekend! My favorite band on the bill is My Morning Jacket, who will make their triumphant return to the stage at Hunter after a five year absence. They are touring on the heels of their upcoming release, "Circuital," which will be released on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Make sure to catch them if you have not! They are easily one of the best live bands on the face of the planet! Other great returning artists who are back for another go, include Michael Franti and Spearhead, The Avett Brothers (Must see), and the legendary and always energetic, North Mississippi All Stars. Grace Potter and



My Morning Jacket



Gov't Mule

The Nocturnals and Umphrey's McGee will also be returning to the festival. Umphrey's will have quite an interesting set as they will be joined on-stage with John Oates of Hall and Oates fame. I can not wait to see what songs will be culled from The Hall and Oates catalog for this one! The festival is also introducing other great acts that will be playing the festival for the first time. This list includes

The Magnetic Zeros, Portugal.The Man, Toubab Krewe, and national festival vets, Bela Fleck and The Flecktones, Hot Tuna(Electric), Mavis Staples, and Tim Reynolds(DMB) with TR3.

Late night festival lovers will have a nice weekend of tunes as well. Gracing the the late night stages will be the very electro Lotus, and The New Deal. You will also get a performance by 7 Walkers which features Dead drummer Bill Kreutzman, George Porter Jr., Papa Mali, and Matt Hubbard. Another great late night journey for all you Deadheads! Thursday's early night arrivals will be greeted with the great sounds of Soulive and The London Souls."We are really excited to bring this amazing group of artists to the Mountain in 2011 and to

expand the fun to a fourth night", said Mountain Jam Founder, and Radio Woodstock President/Owner, Gary Chetkof. "Every year we strive to make the Mountain Jam experience better than the year before, and this year we know we are going to take this over the top!"

The official announcement also had this to say, "The festival's forward-thinking Awareness Village will once again host a special acoustic stage, as well as exhibits from not-for-profit organizations and environmental groups, children's entertainment, performance and sculpture art, physical and spiritual healing, a beer and wine garden, and much more. The Festival will also be continuing its greening efforts with recycling, carbon offsets, and free water refills to reduce the usage of plastic water bottles. The Hunter Mountain Lodge will provide fans with 24-hour access to both food and indoor bathrooms, while onsite camping and a variety of nearby hotels, lodges and ski chalets will ensure that all attendees have a wide variety of accommodations. This year Mountain Jam will also offer expanded VIP options, and will bring back its highly acclaimed "Tavern in the Woods" featuring private bar area and Hammock Grove, as well as a shaded hospitality tents, early arrival access at no additional charge, private camping areas, and a variety of gourmet food and beverages. Mountain Jam will also offer options for VIP on-site lodging and a VIP RV area on the Mountain.

If you have not been to Mountain Jam before, this is usually a really good kick off to the festival circuit in Upstate New York. This year seems no different than the past editions as far as greatness. In fact, it looks like the best one yet!

On the web: [www.mountainjam.com](http://www.mountainjam.com)

### XEROX ROCHESTER INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FEST TOP 5 "CAN'T MISS" PERFORMANCES! 6/10-18/2011 - ROCHESTER, NY

It is that time of year again, and I am going to list my picks for the top five performances you should not miss at Jazzfest! It was tough to do this again, because this line-up is quite impressive! I recommend you see as much as possible! However, if I had to pick ten that I absolutely could not miss, these would be the picks! Please enjoy the festival!

1) **Bela Fleck and The Flecktones** - The original line-up is back, and this is clearly the can't miss show of this festival. This may be the best trio ever assembled in the jazz community. If you have never seen them, you will not regret spending whatever is needed to get in!

2) **Elvis Costello and The Impostors** - One of the great songwriters and performers of our generation, is bringing his band to the Eastman for what is sure to be a must for fans of all music!

3) **G. Love and Special Sauce/Tinted Image** - What a slam-dunk for no cost! G. Love will make you grab some "Cold

Beverage," as he brings his hits to the outdoor stage! And what a bonus! Local act Tinted Image will return this year for supporting duties!

4) **Trombone Shorty** - A smoking set is heading your way from the newly appointed king of New Orleans! Once again, I ask myself...how can this be free! Check these guys out!

5) **Jonas Kullhammar Quartet** - This Swedish jazz act is unbelievable! If you don't believe me, find some music online! Absolutely the best international jazz act on the bill!

On the web: [www.rochesterjazz.com](http://www.rochesterjazz.com)

### PARTY IN THE PARK 6/16-8/18/2011 - RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL SITE - ROCHESTER, NY

Summer is back in Rochester, and with that change in seasons comes the announcement of the annual Party In The Park series. This year, may be one of the most diverse in the history of the event. I think every possible genre of music is covered here, and the line-up is as superb as they come. The

City of Rochester, coupled with The Springut Group, has excelled at providing a great series of music consistently. I am looking forward to all of the announcements that are forthcoming from this wonderful team of concert promotion greatness. Once again, as in the past, the shows will all start at 5:00 PM and usually run to around 10:00 PM. This year will be the first year that admission will be charged! I encourage everyone who may moan at this fact, to understand that they are only charging a petty \$2.00. For all of the great entertainment we have received in the past, we should all appreciate the fact that quality artists are not cheap to put on stage! Come out once again, and enjoy what this city is all about!

#### JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> - LOS LONELY BOYS

Los Lonely Boys play a style of music they call "Texican Rock n' Roll," combining elements of rock and roll, blues, soul, country and Tejano. Their debut single, "Heaven," was a number one hit on the Billboard adult contemporary chart and reached the Top 40 on the Billboard Hot 100 in '04.

#### JUNE 23<sup>RD</sup> - OZOMATLI

Ozomatli is a seven to ten piece band playing primarily Latin, hip hop, and rock music, formed in 1995 in Los Angeles. They are known both for their vocal activist viewpoints and their wide array of musical styles - including salsa, jazz, funk, reggae, rap, and others.

#### JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> - BOOTSY COLLINS

Rising to prominence with James Brown in the late 1960s, and with Parliament-Funkadelic in the '70s, Collins' driving bass guitar and humorous vocals established him as one of the leading names in funk.

#### JULY 7<sup>TH</sup> - GIANT PANDA GUERRILLA DUB SQUAD

The local boys are back for another year of fine dub stylings. After last year's unbelievable turnout, this should be one of the finest moments of the festival season in Rochester! Expect a uniquely great set from The Panda again! Jah Bless!

#### JULY 14<sup>TH</sup> - SPANISH HARLEM ORCHESTRA

Now in its tenth year, the Grammy-winning Spanish Harlem Orchestra is one of the most formidable and authentic Latin jazz combos of the present day. Yet for all of its appeal and success with contemporary audiences, SHO's success is actually rooted in the past.

#### JULY 21<sup>ST</sup> - MOE.

This Upstate New York juggernaut is back for another performance at Party In The Park! Every time Moe plays Rochester, it seems they bring their A-Game to the table. Don't expect this time to be any different!

#### JULY 28<sup>TH</sup> - BIG GIGANTIC

Formed in 2008, this magnificent duo has made a name for themselves in the electronic music scene. Big Gigantic's use of jazz ramblings over top of thumping dance tracks, has put them in an elite group of their own.

#### AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup> - ROBERT RANDOLPH AND THE FAMILY BAND WITH GARY CLARK JR.

What can we possibly say about Mr. Randolph, that has not been said before! Simply stated (and used before), he is the Jimi Hendrix of The Lap Steel. Of course, Rochester's own Darick and Chuck Campbell may have something to say about that! Of course, they are equally as skilled!

#### AUGUST 11<sup>TH</sup> - THE ROMANTICS

The Romantics are most famous for their two hit singles. "What I Like About You," and "Talking In Your Sleep." However, they are easily one of the most influential bands of the 80's New Wave movement.

#### AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup> - SHOOTER JENNINGS

The son of Waylon Jennings is very well known in the city of Rochester! His most memorable performance was at The Rochester International Jazz Festival, a couple of years ago! Expect a mix of psychedelic country rock and southern stylings. This is a great way to end the season!



Bootsy Collins

## ALIVE AT FIVE - ALBANY SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

6/02-8/04/2011 - ALBANY RIVERFRONT PARK  
AT THE CORNING PRESERVE - ALBANY, NY

June 2<sup>nd</sup> is the beginning of Albany's annual Alive at Five concert series. The events take place at the Corning Preserve at Albany Riverfront Park. Like other municipalities that throw these type of events, food, drinks and music set the tone for an after work stimulation of the senses. Although these acts are not everyone's cup of tea, there are some genuine gems among the line-up. Certainly the city of Albany is trying to appease everyone's tastes. So without further notice, here is the official announcement from the City of Albany's website with band information.

### JUNE 2<sup>ND</sup> - VERTICAL HORIZON WITH MIRK

The multi-platinum band behind the smash hits "Everything You Want", "You're a God" and "Best I Ever Had (Gray Sky Morning)" have been evolving since their humble beginnings as an acoustic duo. Now touring to support their new album, Burning the Days, Vertical Horizon thrives on nuanced songwriting and a high-energy live show that keeps fans coming back for more.

### JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup> - THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND WITH COLLETTE AND THE MUDDCATS

The Marshall Tucker Band began honing their definitive blend of rock, country, rhythm & blues, jazz and gospel in 1973. Along the way, these good ol' boys from Spartanburg, South Carolina influenced countless major country acts and sold millions of records on the strength of classic singles like "Heard it in a Love Song", "Can't You See", "Desert Sky" and "Take the Highway".

### JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> - 10,000 MANIACS WITH THE ERIN HARKES BAND

Celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011 with an extensive US tour, multi-platinum Jamestown NY recording artists 10,000 Maniacs were one of the original alternative rock bands. The band's powerful, danceable and socially conscious sound earned them critical acclaim and hit singles like "These Are the Days" and "Because the Night."

### JUNE 23<sup>RD</sup> - MARTHA REEVES AND THE VANDELLAS

Martha Reeves & the Vandellas put Motown at the top of the charts with classics like "Heat Wave", "Jimmy Mack" and their signature "Dancing in the Streets". It's hard to believe that it was nearly 50 years ago when Motown's ultimate soul diva first hit the scene with "Come and Get These Memories," especially once you witness that unmistakable voice live in concert.

### JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> - THOMPSON SQUARE WITH THE HILLBILLY HORNS

With the #1 country hit "Are You Gonna Kiss Me or Not?" and two CMT award nominations, music fans around the world are quickly getting to know the husband-and-wife duo of Kiefer and Shawna Thompson.

### JULY 7<sup>TH</sup> - BURTON CUMMINGS OF THE GUESS WHO

One of the great voices of rock, Burton Cummings scored an unprecedented string of hits with Canada's original rock and roll superstars, The Guess Who. By 1970, The Guess Who had sold more records than the entire Canadian music industry combined with timeless singles like "American Woman", "These Eyes" and "No Time," all powered by Burton's vocals and songwriting.

### JULY 14<sup>TH</sup> - CARBON LEAF WITH ENTER THE HAGGIS

Nearly 20 years into their career, Carbon Leaf's unique blend of Celtic, folk-rock, Americana, bluegrass, rock and pop keeps audiences around the world clamoring for more. Toronto Celtic rock band Enter the Haggis is a grassroots success story, ever teetering on the brink of mainstream success with an eclectic sound and relentless touring schedule.

### JULY 21<sup>ST</sup> - KANSAS WITH SPACELAND

America's most successful progressive rock band, Kansas still rules classic rock airwaves with classics like "Dust in the Wind", "Carry On Wayward Son" and "Point of Know Return." The band played to sold-out stadiums throughout the '70s and '80s and produced no less than four platinum and eight gold records.

### JULY 28<sup>TH</sup> - PARROTBACH

Playing the best of Jimmy Buffett and all your favorite island tunes, Parrotbeach have been bringing the sound of the beach to appreciative audiences for over a decade. One of the only fulltime Buffett tributes in the country, Parrotbeach will have you singing, laughing and dancing in the streets in no time.

### AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup> - LIVE'S ED KOWALCZYK WITH MISSION HILL

Former lead singer of the multi-platinum rock band Live, Ed Kowalczyk's powerful voice and earnest songwriting drove his band to astounding success. Performing all the hits ("Lightning Crashes", "I Alone", "All Over You", "Selling the Drama", and more), plus selections from his critically acclaimed solo debut Alive, Ed remains one of alternative rock's most influential stars.

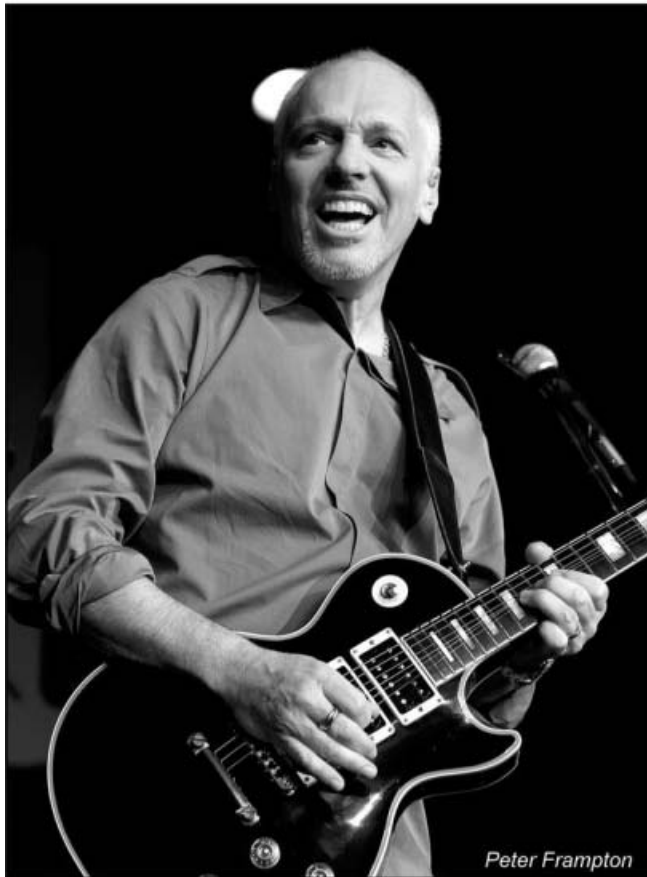
**CAMP BISCO X**7/07-09/2011 - INDIAN LOOKOUT COUNTRY CLUB -  
MARIAVILLE, NY

From Disco Biscuits website, "Camp Bisco is an outdoor music festival held at the beautiful Indian Lookout Country Club, a world-class property located near Albany, NY. Camp Bisco is a 3-day rain-or-shine event with camping. Attendees may begin to arrive at 8am on Thursday morning July 7<sup>th</sup>. Camp Bisco Ten will feature 3 days and 3 nights of music on 5 stages, including 2 side-by-side MAIN STAGES, two afternoon and late night DANCE TENTS featuring top international Dance acts, a SILENT DISCO and an UP & COMING stage. This event is not to be missed! Join us at Indian Lookout Country club for our 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary at ILCC and our tenth installment of this amazing event." Obviously, The Biscuits are the Headlining act!

**Headliner:** Disco Biscuits

**Other acts:** Wiz Khalifa, Yeasayer, Cut Copy, MSTRKRFT, Bassnectar, Rusco, Neon Indian, Skrillex, Pretty Lights, Nero, Wolfgang Gartner, Death From Above 1979, Holy Ghost, Ghostland Observatory, Black Moth Super Rainbow, Das Racist, The Hood Internet, Lotus, Easy Star All Stars, Beats Antique, and many more.

Tickets: Check Info at [www.campbisco.net](http://www.campbisco.net)



Peter Frampton

**ARTPARK 2011**

6/14-9/07-18/2011 - LEWISTON, NY

The greater Buffalo region will once again be treated with a fine dose of outdoor live shows this summer. Artpark in Lewiston (North of Niagara Falls) has raised the bar again for quality musical acts that cater to many musical tastes. Like many cities around the country, Artpark offers a fine mix of free shows and admission concerts. The park is celebrating it's 37th summer season this year, and this could be one of the finest line-ups that they have delivered to date. The line-up is rich in classic rock and jam band oriented music, but is quite diverse when you factor in the paid admission shows. The line-up features the Tuesday in the Park series and Coors Light Wednesdays, which are both free! There are also a handful of special ticketed event concerts. New to the free concert series this year is a \$25 standing-room only ticket guaranteeing a spot in the pit at the front of the stage regardless of what time you arrive at the show. This includes a priority parking pass!

## SCHEDULE

## TUESDAYS IN THE PARK

June 14<sup>th</sup> - **Blue Oyster Cult**  
 June 21<sup>st</sup> - **Creedence Clearwater Revisited**  
 June 28<sup>th</sup> - **Peter Frampton**  
 July 5<sup>th</sup> - **Pat Benatar**  
 July 12<sup>th</sup> - **38 Special**  
 July 19<sup>th</sup> - **Cheap Trick**  
 July 26<sup>th</sup> - **Lynyrd Skynyrd**  
 August 2<sup>nd</sup> - **ZZ Top**  
 August 9<sup>th</sup> - **Edgar Winter**  
 August 16<sup>th</sup> - **Ted Nugent**  
 August 23<sup>rd</sup> - **George Thorogood**  
 August 30<sup>th</sup> - **The Machine** (Pink Floyd Cover Band)

## COORS LIGHT WEDNESDAYS

June 29<sup>th</sup> - **Umphey's McGee**  
 July 6<sup>th</sup> - **The Trews**  
 July 20<sup>th</sup> - **Moe**  
 July 27<sup>th</sup> - **Bright Eyes**  
 August 3<sup>rd</sup> - **O.A.R.**  
 September 7<sup>th</sup> - **Gregg Allman**

## PAID SHOWS

July 13<sup>th</sup> - **The Black Keys**  
 August 1<sup>st</sup> - **The Decemberists**  
 August 4<sup>th</sup> - **Wiz Khalifa**  
 August 21<sup>st</sup> - **Garrison Keillor**

All shows on Tuesdays and Wednesdays begin at 6:30 PM. All ticketed shows begin at 8:00 PM with the exception of Garrison Keillor which starts at 7:30 PM. Tickets for all events are available at Artpark or online at [tickets.com](http://tickets.com) or [artpark.net](http://artpark.net).

## THURSDAYS AT THE SQUARE AND ROCKS THE HARBOR

6/02-8/27/2011 - BUFFALO PLACE - BUFFALO, NY

### THURSDAYS AT THE SQUARE

Starting on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Buffalo Place will host their annual Thursdays In The Square series. For this, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, the series will be split up between two different venues. From June 2<sup>nd</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the events will take place at La-Fayette Square. The remaining dates starting June 30<sup>th</sup> and continuing through August 4<sup>th</sup>, will take place at the Erie Canal Harbor Central Wharf. All of these events will begin at 5 PM and will end around 9 PM as in the past. The line-up this year is easily one of the best in the history of this concert series. Below are the dates:

June 2<sup>nd</sup> - **Edward Sharpe and The Magnetic Zeroes**

June 9<sup>th</sup> - **Morris Day and The Time**

*(if you have never seen these proteges of Prince, please go...they will blow you away)*

June 16<sup>th</sup> - **Blues Traveler**

June 23<sup>rd</sup> - **Grace Potter and The Nocturnals**

*(Great tunes, and the best legs in the business)*

June 30<sup>th</sup> - **Lowest of The Low**

July 7<sup>th</sup> - **Sloan**

*(once again, a must see if you are new to them.*

*One of the great Canadian bands!)*

July 14<sup>th</sup> - **Court Yard Hounds**

*(Yes, Rochester is jealous of you this year!*

*2/3 of the Dixie Chicks, good stuff!)*

July 21<sup>st</sup> - **Southside Johnny and The Asbury Dukes**

*(One of the best bar bands to ever step on a stage, ask The Boss!)*

July 28<sup>th</sup> - **Parliament Funkadelic**

*(Oh my, between George Clinton in Buffalo,*

*and Bootsy in The Roc, we are going to be blessed.)*

August 4<sup>th</sup> - **Tokyo Police Club with The Sheila Divine**

### BUFFALO ROCKS THE HARBOR

All of these shows are taking place at the Erie Canal Harbor Central Wharf, and will require an admission cost or a ticket. All of the tickets for the shows listed below are \$10 in advance or \$20 at the door. The only exception will be The Tragically Hip show which will cost you \$46.

The schedule is below:

June 24<sup>th</sup> - **Dark Star Orchestra with Soulive**

June 25<sup>th</sup> - **Elvis Costello and The Impostors**

July 30<sup>th</sup> - **The Tragically Hip**

July 31<sup>st</sup> - **Flogging Molly with Badfish**

August 26<sup>th</sup> - **Alice Cooper with Anvil**

August 27<sup>th</sup> - **Great Big Sea with Martin Sexton**

Please see [www.buffaloplace.com](http://www.buffaloplace.com) for (ticket) information.

### PHISH SUPER BALL IX

7/01-03/2011 - WATKINS GLEN INTERNATIONAL - WATKINS GLEN, NY

From the Phish Website: "It's Phish's biggest. Ball. Ever. So big we can't. Contain it. In one sentence, Super Ball IX, Phish's ninth festival, will take place July 1-3 at Watkins Glen International. Located amidst the rolling hills of central New York's Finger Lakes region, the site offers an abundance of campsites and is just a short drive from numerous Northeastern cities. Super Ball IX will mark Phish's first-ever festival performance over July 4 weekend, and the first major music festival held at Watkins Glen since 1973's legendary Summer Jam. It is also Phish's first-ever performance at a facility with "Watkins" in its name."

Headliner: The one and only Phish!

Other Acts: None announced as of press time, but expect to see some scattered about with Generators!

Tickets: Check info at [www.superballix.com](http://www.superballix.com).

### TIME WARNER SIGNATURE HOME BALLOONFEST

6/10-13/2011 - JAMESVILLE BEACH PARK - JAMESVILLE, NY

It is that time in Syracuse once again for the annual Balloonfest sponsored by Time Warner. June 11<sup>th</sup>'s headliner is quite fitting as Moe will take the stage near it's Central New York roots.. The pride of Upstate will perform at 8:30 PM on night two! Classic rock fans will be highly energized on the 10th and 12th! One Friday the 10<sup>th</sup>, Benny Mardones of "Into The Night," fame, will bring his band for a headlining performance. The closer on Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup>, will be 38 Special! This band obviously cannot get enough of Upstate New York! They will be hitting up the Jazz Fest in Rochester during the same week,



Court Yard Hounds

and have been like a local band over the last couple of years! Of course, fans of their Southern Rock will not be bitching!

A highly diverse variety of Central New York favorites will fill in the schedule of music over the three-day fest. The schedule for the fest is as followed:

FRIDAY, JUNE 10
6 p.m. - <b>Kim Monroe &amp; Chris Eves Band</b> 7:30 p.m. - <b>Kane</b> 9:30 p.m. - <b>Benny Mardones</b>
SATURDAY, JUNE 11
2 p.m. - <b>Turnip Stampede</b> 3:30 p.m. - <b>The Barndogs</b> 5 p.m. - <b>Dark Hollow</b> 6:30 p.m. - <b>Los Blancos</b> 8:30 p.m. - <b>moe</b>
SUNDAY, JUNE 12
1 p.m. - <b>Tipp Hillbillies</b> 2:15 p.m. - <b>Kat Tale</b> 3:30 p.m. - <b>The Reissues</b> 5:15 p.m. - <b>Elephant Mountain</b> 6:30 p.m. - <b>Frostbit Blue</b> 9 p.m. - <b>.38 Special</b>

The 32<sup>nd</sup> year of this event also includes a colorful potpourri of hot air balloons hovering up above the crowd. Food and drink are premium here, as vendors will be out in full force. So, don't forget your wallet!

Admission at the gate will be \$10 per day, with children 12 and under free.

Advance sale tickets are \$15 for a three-day pass, available at the OnCenter box office, Sound Garden in Armory Square and 888-512-7469. Parking is free.

### SARANAC BREWERY SUMMER SCHEDULE

5/26-9/15/2011 - SARANAC BREWERY -  
UTICA, NY

Starting on May 26<sup>th</sup> and ending the first Thursday in September, you can head down to the brewery after work and take in some great music and stellar beer! Other than the great times on Thursday, you can also check out the Saranac Summer Concert Series. Admission on Thursday nights is \$5.00 and benefits the local United Way. Admission costs for The Summer Concert Series varies by the event and can be found at [www.saranac.com](http://www.saranac.com). Saranac Thursdays start around 5:30pm and end at 8:30pm. Parking is available in the parking lot behind the Brewery on Columbia Street and in the park-

ing lot across the street from our Brewery Courtyard on Court Street which can be accessed from Stark Street. Below is the schedule for Saranac Thursdays and the Summer Concert series.

SARANAC THURSDAYS
May 26 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Crazy Fools</b> June 2 <sup>nd</sup> - <b>Dashboard Nixon</b> June 9 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Time Trooper</b> June 16 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Matt Chase and Thunder Canyon</b> June 23 <sup>rd</sup> - <b>Showtime</b> June 30 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Jimkata</b> July 7 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Syndicate</b> July 14 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Sassafrass Jenkins</b> July 21 <sup>st</sup> - <b>Gridley Paige</b> July 28 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Enter The Haggis</b> August 4 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Three Inch Fury</b> August 11 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Dusty Puppies</b> August 18 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Strung Sideways/Rusty Doves</b> August 25 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Sirsy</b> September 1 <sup>st</sup> - <b>Lynch</b> September 8 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Fulton Chain Gang</b> September 15 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Utica Music Fest Kick-off</b>
SUMMER CONCERT SERIES
June 24 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Michael Franti and Spearhead</b> June 25 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Grace Potter and The Nocturnals</b> July 13 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Umphrey's McGee</b> August 5 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Robert Randolph and The Family Band</b>

Check the website for more details! More show announcements could be coming our way soon!

[Words by Erik Jensen]



Michael Franti



# DAN SMALLS PRESENTS

## INFO AND TICKETS

FOR THESE SHOWS AND MORE AT:  
[DANSMALLSPRESENTS.COM](http://DANSMALLSPRESENTS.COM)

JUNE 3	THE BASEBALL PROJECT	OMMEGANG BREWERY, COOPERSTOWN
JUNE 17	DAVID BAZAN	THE HAUNT, ITHACA
JUNE 19	CHAD VAN GAALEN	CASTAWAYS, ITHACA
JUNE 24	JOSIAH WOLF	CASTAWAYS, ITHACA
JUNE 30	LEGENDARY SHACK*SHAKERS	THE HAUNT, ITHACA
JULY 2	CROOKED FINGERS	DELILAH'S, ITHACA
JULY 16	EMMYLOU HARRIS	GREEK PEAK
JULY 31	BRIGHT EYES/MOUNTAIN GOATS	PAPERMILL ISLAND, BALDWINVILLE, NY
AUG. 5	AMERICANA FESTIVAL	FEAT. STEVE EARLE, FELICE BROS AND MORE BREWERY OMMEGANG, COOPERSTOWN
AUG. 6	STEVE EARLE	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA
AUG. 14	DAN ZANES	HARRO EAST BALLROOM, ROCHESTER
AUG. 18	TALLY HALL/APRIL SMITH	THE HAUNT, ITHACA
AUG. 21	STEVE EARLE	HARRO EAST BALLROOM, ROCHESTER
AUG. 26	ROBBIE FULKS	DELILAH'S, ITHACA
SEPT. 13	THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA
SEPT. 15	THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS	HARRO EAST BALLROOM, ROCHESTER
SEPT. 16	ROSANNE CASH	HARRO EAST BALLROOM, ROCHESTER
SEPT. 18	GARRISON KEILLOR	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA
SEPT. 29	GORDON LIGHTFOOT	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA
OCT. 12	ANDREW BIRD	HARRO EAST BALLROOM, ROCHESTER
OCT. 17	ANDREW BIRD	BARDAVON, POUGHKEEPSIE, NY
OCT. 18	ANDREW BIRD	ANDERSON CENTER, BINGHAMTON, NY
OCT. 22	PETER YARROW	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA
NOV. 8	JOE BONAMASSA	STATE THEATRE, ITHACA

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FRIDAY JUNE 10  
**Natalie Cole**



SATURDAY JUNE 11  
**THE FAB FAUX**



TUESDAY JUNE 14  
**BELA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES**  
THE ORIGINAL LINEUP



WEDNESDAY JUNE 15  
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**CHRIS BOTTI**

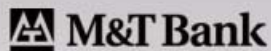


THURSDAY JUNE 16  
**k.d. lang**  
& THE SISS BOOM BANG



FRIDAY JUNE 17  
**ELVIS COSTELLO**  
AND THE IMPOSTERS

JUNE 10-18-2011

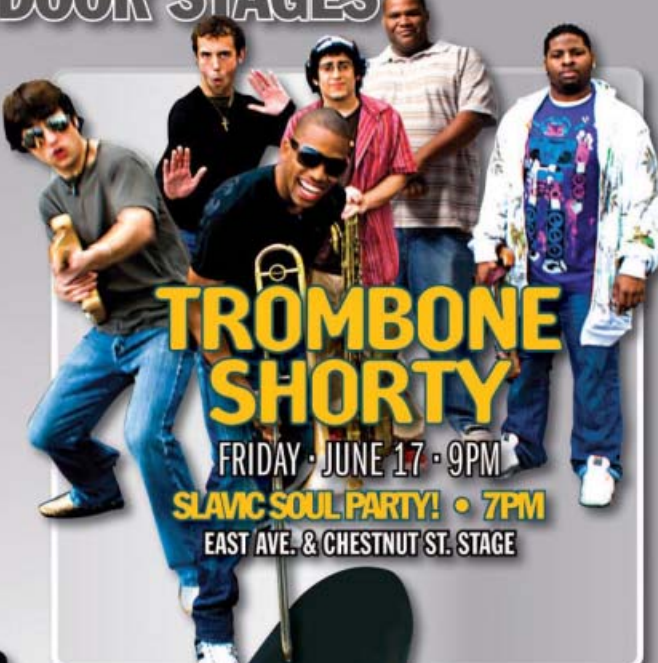


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**TROMBONE  
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**SLAVIC SOUL PARTY! · 7PM**  
EAST AVE. & CHESTNUT ST. STAGE



**38 SPECIAL**  
SATURDAY JUNE 18 · 9PM  
**CHRIS BEARD BAND · 7PM**  
EAST AVE. & CHESTNUT ST. STAGE



**G LOVE &  
SPECIAL SAUCE**  
SATURDAY · JUNE 18 · 9PM  
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+GRASSROOTS FESTIVAL+  
**GRASSROOTS MAKES A BIG  
SPLASH AGAINST GAS DRILLING**  
HOW ONE OF THE BIGGEST UPSTATE FESTIVALS IS  
TAKING THEIR SHOW ON THE ROAD THIS SUMMER TO  
PROTECT OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE: WATER!

BY JACK BROWN

*"You ain't gonna miss your water until your well runs dry;  
No matter how you treat him, the man will never be satisfied."  
- Bob Marley, 'Could You Be Loved'*

The Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival began as an idea to celebrate original music while also raising awareness and capital for worthy social causes. It quickly evolved into a nationally-recognized gathering of conscious artists and a favorite destination for Upstate music lovers. This year, the festival's organizers decided to take a stand against one of the most serious environmental threats in the history of New York State by forming The Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative. Now they are staring in the face of the largest energy companies on the planet.

GrassRoots has teamed up with a coalition of local governments and environmental organizations to create **THE BIG SPLASH**, a traveling version of their famous Dance Tent, to defend New York State's water from unsafe gas drilling. **THE BIG SPLASH** will be a series of free shows across the region, starting with Binghamton on June 5<sup>th</sup> and Syracuse on June 12<sup>th</sup>. "We are tired of being ganged up on by the energy industry," says Jon McNamara, a musician-turned-activist who was recruited by GrassRoots to be co-director of the touring event. "We're turning the tables and ganging up on them."

Giant fuel corporations have set their predatory sights on the Marcellus Shale, a deposit of natural gas under much of the Upstate area. Their weapon is an extraction method called hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking"), a controversial process that uses high-pressure combinations of fluids and toxic chemicals to blast open fissures in underground rock formations, collecting the gas in production wells. The shale can be as far as 10,000 feet deep, which means companies must first drill through the water table that has supported generations of life in the area. The chemical concoctions used in the process then bleed into the underground water supply, polluting fresh natural springs that currently sustain entire towns, villages, and cities. The New York Times recently revealed that fracking wastewater contains levels of radioactivity thousands of times the federal maximum in drinking water, as well as countless known carcinogens like radium, benzene, and methanol. Each company's toxic recipe is a closely guarded secret. "This is a greedy, shortsighted attack on our most

precious natural resource," warns McNamara. "Without any exaggeration, fracking could mean the end to life as we know it in New York State."

McNamara is aware of this fact better than most. For the past 20 years, he has lived in the quiet community of Owego, outside of Binghamton, on the banks of the Susquehanna River. In 2007, Owego was named the 'Coolest Small Town in America' by *Good Morning America*. He heard the horror stories about hydro-fracking: human health risks, pollution, and large-scale coverups. Soon the nightmare would move right next door. When the news about the Marcellus Shale hit, our neighbor state Pennsylvania quickly welcomed the natural gas boom. Officials gave the industry incentives and literally laid out the red carpet (the state still does not tax the gas industry). McNamara's hometown is only 5 miles north of PA and located directly on Route 17. "We've seen significant overflow from the industry," he said. "Now our once quaint town is filled with trucks hauling sand, water, and dangerous drilling byproduct. If *Good Morning America* came back today, I doubt that Owego would still be named the coolest small town."

Meanwhile, Pennsylvania and its neighbors are stuck with all of the burdens from gas production. Their streams, rivers, and lakes are being polluted more and more every day, endangering wildlife and leading to livestock sickness and deaths (as well as unexplained cases of cancer and many other diseases in local residents). Their towns are congested with gas trucks, concrete drilling pads, drilling rigs, and tanks set up only yards from homes. And there have been instances reported of illegal dumping, spills during transport, pipeline explosions, surface spills, and residential well-water contamination. This past May, the State of Maryland sued Chesapeake Energy and the State of Pennsylvania for a large fracking well spill in Bradford County. Some PA officials have actually admitted that allowing hydro-fracking was a "huge mistake." On top of that, the gas industry has shown that it has no plan for dealing with the billions of gallons of wastewater generated in the process, and some of the radioactive waste has already been dumped at water treatment plants in New York State.

People are starting to realize what's happening in the region and they are terrified. The rural town of Dryden just banned fracking and many other Upstate communities are expected to follow suit this summer. Assemblyman Steve Englebright (of Long Island) recently remarked, "Hydro-fracking is a monumental problem. The worst of our time." New York taxpayers, homeowners, businesses and workers are already struggling with our current fiscal problems. They are speaking out because fracking will affect real estate, agriculture, tourism, wineries, farmers, home values, taxes, and most frightening of all, public health. Across the state, fracking will only make things worse economically.

Door-to-door salesmen who work for the gas companies claim differently. They approach landowners to lease their mineral rights in exchange for money, offering false promises that it's safe and clean. However, the industry's track record is tainted with absolute irresponsibility and amorality. Natural gas was

once touted as the "transition fuel" between oil and alternative energy, but a recent study from Cornell University states that "natural gas production produces more greenhouse gases than burning coal" due to methane gas release during drilling. Residents are being duped by secretive business proposals, blinded by misled hopes of wealth while being kept in the dark about the irreversible environmental consequences. Once the Gas Interests are done sucking this state dry, they will leave behind a toxic waste dump and move on.

Filmmaker Josh Fox exposed much of the secrecy in his documentary *Gasland*, which aired on HBO last year and has become a popular rallying cry around the issue. Currently, there are nine states in America that allow hydro-fracking. For the time being, NY Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has promised to sue to keep it out of New York State. While states can regulate drilling, a provision in the 2005 federal energy law passed by Congress prevents the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from regulating fracking. The exemption is commonly called the "Halliburton loophole," a reference to the company's pioneering role in fracking and the pressure they exerted on the federal government in convening the energy task force that urged the exemption to the Clean Waters Act.

Due to intense public pressure, Congress recently ordered the EPA to study potential human health and water quality threats from gas drilling. The agency responded by holding a series of public hearings regarding hydro-fracking around the country. One of these hearings was scheduled to be held last year at Binghamton University, and McNamara planned a rally that would take place at the same time on the BU campus. "The rally was supported by almost every environmental group on the planet and was to feature speeches by Josh Fox, Congressman Maurice Hinchey, activist Lois Gibbs, and Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan, to name a few," McNamara said. "In addition to this great line up of speakers, I had arranged support from the Upstate music community. Donna the Buffalo, Sophistafunk, The Sim Redmond Band, Yolk, Tim Herron Corporation, Dutch Bucket System, and many more all agreed to send representatives from their groups to support the event. This rally became larger than life in the weeks before the hearings. The hype became so powerful that ultimately the EPA and Binghamton University canceled the hearings in Binghamton."

The hearings were then quickly rescheduled to be held at the OnCenter in Syracuse. One day after the announcement, they too were canceled. "This is when I realized how big of a role the music community could play in this fight. There had been plenty of rallies with great speakers, but none of them had generated excitement like this event with music," McNamara recalls. "When we planned this rally we hoped to make national news. With all of the controversy surrounding the events we did in fact make national news. Also, the story of the hearings being canceled and rescheduled dominated local news for the better part of a month in the Southern Tier. So in the end, we were far more successful than we ever thought possible and we never played a note."

After this huge publicity event, McNamara was called '*The Man Who Scared the EPA Out of Two Cities.*' At the same time, GrassRoots founder Jordan Puryear became interested in getting involved with the anti-fracking issue. He had a conversation with his longtime partner Chris Tate in late January while sitting around the woodstove in Tate's living room. "Jordan and I were struggling conceptually with what to do about the intrusion of the Gas Interests into our part of the country," Tate said. "We had been talking about New York's waters and how lucky we had been up to this point to still have some of the cleanest waters in North America. Over a number of days and a lot of discussion, Jordan finally hit on the concept of barnstorming the GrassRoots Dance Tent around the state this summer."

Shortly thereafter, the *Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative* was formed with Puryear, McNamara and Tate as the founding members. They have partnered with the City of Binghamton, The Sierra Club, Catskill Mountain Keeper and the Riverwalk Hotel to present a series of events throughout the first weekend of June in Binghamton, NY that will cap off on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> in Recreation Park from 11am to 9pm. The first-ever installment of **THE BIG SPLASH** will feature live bands and special guests including Yolk, Sim Redmond Band, Drift Wood, Thousands of One, Dutch Bucket System [McNamara's band], Mayor Matt Ryan, and many others.

The following week, **THE BIG SPLASH** will travel to the Inner Harbor of Syracuse, NY on Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup> for another all day event. A long list of performers include Donna The Buffalo, Sophistafunk, and many other local organizations will be present, such as the Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation, The Syracuse Peace Council, and anti-fracking groups like 'You Can't Drink Money.' Both events will be completely FREE to the public, with a suggested donation of \$10. "We are proud to be a part of **THE BIG SPLASH**," says Sophistafunk drummer Emanuel Washington. "If more people were aware of the dangers of hydro-fracking, we could stand up together and ban it in New York State! Music is a powerful way to spread the word."

For more info: [www.FingerLakesCleanWaters.org](http://www.FingerLakesCleanWaters.org)

Special thanks to: GrassRoots, The FingerLakes Clean Waters Initiative, The Syracuse Peace Council, Tamaralee Spadafore, George "Little Georgie" Rossi, and the *You Can't Drink Money / Hydro-fracking Awareness Group* [check them on Facebook].

[Words by Jack Brown]

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+GREY FOX BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL+  
**PREVIEW AND INTERVIEW WITH  
 FESTIVAL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,  
 MARY BURDETTE**

BY JED METZGER

While New York may not be the first state people think of when they think bluegrass, in fact, New York plays host to the best bluegrass festival of the year. This is not just idle praise, The **Grey Fox Bluegrass Festival** was voted as the best festival of 2008, not best bluegrass festival, best festival in several on-line polls. This was followed with the 2009 IBMA Bluegrass Event of the Year Award, a category they have been a finalist for on five separate occasions. In my mind with the organization and the lineup set for 2011 there is no better small music festival in this country. *The festival runs July 14<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> on the Walsh Farm in Oak Hill.* Set on a high country Catskill New York region farm, I believe you will find a sense throughout the weekend, that you are just where you ought to be— good music and good people all connected to the earth via the music.

What makes the festival work is the organization. Producer Mary Tyler Doub, Assistant Director, Mary Burdette along with a dozen crew chiefs who manage several hundred volunteers from around the world who are self-less in their commitment to make the Grey Fox a good time for everyone. Need ice? Well the ice truck calling out “iiiiicceeeeeeee” is right around the corner. If it rains hay bales will appear in an instant. Best of all is that this is not a one way festival, the festival encourages folks to bring along an instrument, take a class or just meet folks and pick together. The headliners join right in, there will not a performer that did not meet and greet and talk to folks to share the common love of fine music.

In terms of the professional music, one of the great things about the festival is the multiple stages. The dance tent is always humming, the main stage perfectly set, but perhaps the gem is the Master tent, where the biggest names come and sit and talk and joke and play in a very up close and relaxed manner. At most festivals when the professional music stops the night would be over, not at Grey Fox, now the party begins and the pickers head down to the campground and



get out an instrument and find group to sit and play with. The atmosphere invites you, no matter what your skill, to sit down with strangers and play and guess what, you ain't strangers by morning.

All this and we have not even talked about the performers, and this year every day is loaded with the best in bluegrass – this includes the old school perfection that is JD Crowe & the New South, the newgrass genius of Sam Bush, a fantastic new Tim O'Brien project called “O'Brien Party of Seven”, the fun loving and honey voiced Claire Lynch, the gender bending maniacs that are Yonder Mountain String Band, bluegrass boy and song writer extraordinaire Peter Rowan, numerous IBMA individual category winners and in my mind the best bluegrass band in the land, Del McCoury .

With so much to cover, I sat down with one of the main festival organizers, Mary Burdette to get some of the inside scoop on this year's Grey Fox and she proved to be a wealth of information as well as a darn good storyteller in her own right on the history of bluegrass and NYS bluegrass in particular:

**Jed Metzger:** *Mary thanks so much for taking some time to talk about the Grey Fox, perhaps just to educate the readers, tell us a little about the history of the festival and how you got involved?*

**Mary Burdette:** Wow, well I've been involved since 1977, way before it was called the Grey Fox. First it started out as the Berkshire Mountain Music Festival. The funny thing is that I did not even know I liked bluegrass but I came and had what I can best describe as an epiphany – I understand that happens to a lot of folks with this music – and I got hooked. So I wrote the festival and started volunteering. I was a special education teacher at the time and I used to go grade papers at this barbershop in Herkimer, NY when they had their weekly jam session, one day the bass player didn't come so they pressed me into service, you know “here is the C, here is the D, just stay in time” and that has sparked a lifelong interest. The festival moved and became known as Winterhawk and now Grey Fox. Since 1985 it has been produced by Mary Tyler Doub. It has always had a reputation for being very well organized, family friendly and for presenting the best in all styles of bluegrass music. We started out with just the Main Stage, but now have a big dance tent, the Masters Stage which you touched on earlier, a Family Tent for hundreds of kids who come to Grey Fox, our Slow Jam (instructional) Tent for beginners, Grass Roots Tent for intermediate players, and our Bluegrass Academy for Kids which teaches more than 100 kids to play and sing bluegrass during the festival. This year we are really excited that we were approached by Random House who will host the family tent and fill it with books and make that kind of environment for families.

**JM:** *I have to say I got hooked by bluegrass myself, the Old and in the Way album led me to Ralph Stanley and that was it. One thing that stands out for me has been the vibe, while bluegrass festivals in general tend to be friendlier, Grey Fox is especially so, how do you go about creating that?*

**MB:** It is in the front of our brains. We always keep in mind that we need music and activities that will appeal to essentially three generations of bluegrass fans who probably have different tastes in music. Therefore, we book all types of bands, but more than that, we offer lots of workshops, demonstrations and activities for everyone – from the stellar Main Stage acts to kid’s performers to morning yoga and even cooking demonstrations. Lucy our yoga instructor comes all the way from Oklahoma to help people stretch and be healthy. Frank Solivan and the Red Stick Ramblers will do side by side cooking demonstrations. We have an organic produce stand. The festival is very eclectic. If you don’t want to see the band on the Main Stage, there’s something else to do like check out a workshop or head to the dance tent. Bluegrass will not stay alive if we just cater to the traditional. We need to develop new audiences and you do that by diversity. All this comes together to form that vibe that you, I think correctly have seen.

**JM:** *Let’s talk just a moment about the location, why NY?*

**MB:** Bluegrass has been more popular in NYS than most people realize. Bill Knowlton has had a radio show out of Syracuse for 35 years or so, and the Adirondack Bluegrass League has also been around a long time. Many people don’t realize just how strong bluegrass has been in NYS for over three decades. All over the state there are bluegrass associations and radio programs and weekly picking groups.

**JM:** *I know we would have a range of spiritual beliefs out there but I have to say if the beauty of the daytime farm does not get you, the night full of stars will have a person thinking about a higher something. I love it you’re having the fantastic Gibson Brothers coming to the festival!*

**MB:** You’re right, Jed. And just as the festival’s lineup is eclectic, so are its fans. They are from all walks of life, from nearly 40 states and about a dozen countries. So their beliefs are all over the map, too. It’s the love of the music that brings us all together. Grey Fox is a place where socio-political or religious beliefs don’t matter. We’re there to enjoy music, friends, family and nature. And yes the Gibson Brothers are about as fine a bluegrass band as New York can claim but let us not forget that Claire Lynch was born in NY (raised in Alabama), Tony Trischka is a New Yorker, plus we have City Grass coming this year from NYC and we are delighted that the group Cornerstone who got back together for Rick Manning’s bluegrass festival in Ithaca this January will be coming and they are great New York pickers and singers.

**JM:** *Good news I had a great time listening to Cornerstone in January. Before we talk about individual performers, one thing that makes Grey Fox special is that so many of the masters take to the master tent in the afternoon for a conversation/demonstration interaction – how do you make that happen?*

**MB:** One of the first things I realized about bluegrass is that the music and its performers are SO accessible. The bottom line is that bluegrass musicians and exactly like bluegrass fans- they just play better. Artists like Tim O’Brien, Sam Bush, Leigh and Eric Gibson, Claire Lynch and others love to connect with others. They all want to share their music, their lives

and they love interacting with other musicians at that stage. So, it’s pretty easy to set all that up. We ask and they say, “Sure!” We never get asked, “well if I do it how many cd’s will I sell?” There are very few prima-donnas in bluegrass, it’s not the nature of the music.

**JM:** *Ok I will put this out there, there are a lot of bluegrass festivals, Grey Fox is different. Grey Fox really represents all types of bluegrass and acoustic music. For instance, if anyone who likes the mandolin has ever seen Jeff Austin from Yonder Mountain play they most likely had to have their jaw wired back to their face, but yet they get very little airtime on sirus/xm – how come you put such a diverse representation of bands out there?*

**MB:** Our producer loves all sorts of music and all styles of bluegrass, from old-time to very, very progressive stuff. So, she naturally wants to book an eclectic show. Also, we feel that it’s important to grow the audience. Not everyone likes the same thing, so it works for us to present lots of different styles of music. The other thing we do that is very successful is bring new, upcoming young bands to the Northeast that are largely unknown but who are on the cusp of really taking off. We were among the first to book Allison Krauss (when she was a teenager) and the same is true of Chris Thile and Nickel Creek. Rockin’ Acoustic Circus now is on that same trajectory. The Dixie Bee-Liners actually all met at Grey Fox and I hope everyone gets a chance to hear the Spinney Brothers out of Nova Scotia. It is just fantastic we have three generations of people now who have and continue to come to Grey Fox.

**JM:** *Can I throw some names at you and get a reaction? Del?*

**MB:** Del is who I think of whenever someone mentions bluegrass. He is such a sweet heart. He’s THE icon with the voice, the material and the presence. He’s often called the “Ambassador of Bluegrass.” He has won the National Endowment of the Arts Award. Rightly so. He brings the tradition of the “high lonesome sound”.

**JM:** *Peter Rowan?*

**MB:** That wonderful rich, velvety voice, his unique vocal style that is so closely tied to Bill Monroe (whose 100<sup>th</sup> birthday is this year) and all the bands he’s helped establish since the 70s with David Grisman, Jerry Garcia, etc.

**JM:** *Sammy Bush?*

**MB:** We had to bring him back as he did not get to finish his set last time! He is the father of newgrass. He keeps reinventing himself and yet does not seem to age. He plays the pants of the mandolin and the fiddle for that matter and he brings in the dance crowd.

**JM:** *Claire Lynch?*

**MB:** She brings a tremendous amount of classy energy. She is swifty and contemporary. She is one of the best singers, writers and interpreters of contemporary bluegrass anytime anywhere. She is a song bird.

**JM:** *O’Brien Party of Seven?*

**MB:** This is Tim O’Brien, his sister Mollie (who has a fabulous



voice), her husband Rich Moore, Tim's two sons and Mollie's two daughters. Their new recording project is songs by the great Roger Miller. They are working on a project of Roger Miller songs. And that's what they're bringing to Grey Fox this summer. This band will only perform at three festivals this year; Grey Fox being their one and only East Coast show!

**JM: Who else are you really excited to see?**

**MB:** EVERYONE! But I do have some personal favorites: At the top of my list are The SteelDrivers. They have such a different sound, sort of a bluegrass soul sound. I'm also very excited about Monroeville, a young band from Nashville.

**JM: Last question, for those that have not come before, what should they bring?**

**MB:** Don't forget your e-ticket and photo ID. If you're camping, which I would suggest, you'll need your tent, sleeping bag, some sort of lantern or light, a cooler and other food prep gear (although the food vendors are spectacular), layered clothing (it gets hot in the daytime and cools off at night); rain gear, money for food, CDs, etc that you will want to buy, your instruments if you play, camera, etc. My biggest advice

is to pack light; bring only what you need. The music and the people around you will be the focus, not what you lug with you. We have 24/7 first aid and security, showers, water tankers, etc. on site. Verizon and ATT cell phones should work great on site. A more complete list is on our website at [www.greyfoxbluegrass.com](http://www.greyfoxbluegrass.com) – or you can join our yahoo discussion group if you're new to the festival. [www.greyfoxbluegrass.com/ws/pages/discussion-group.php](http://www.greyfoxbluegrass.com/ws/pages/discussion-group.php)

Tickets are still available but going fast. If you're planning on camping, I would suggest nailing down your tickets before you set out for the festival. Day tickets could sell out too, so check with the ticket office prior to arrival. 888.946.8496.

Online tickets:

[www.greyfoxbluegrass.com/ws/pages/tickets.php](http://www.greyfoxbluegrass.com/ws/pages/tickets.php)

Advance ticket prices run through June 30.

Well I guess there you have it, if you love acoustic music and if you play even a little bit, middle of July 2011, there really is only one place to be, look for me, be happy to pick with you.

[Words by Jed Metzger]

## THE BIG UP FESTIVAL+ FUSING MUSIC & ART: A CALL TO ARTISTS

BY FRANESA LIEBICH-PYLE

It is two million B.C., a nomadic cavemen tribe scours the land for food and resources to provide for their families. Communicating with only grunts and gestures, the tribe gathers nightly around their latest invention: fire. It has been several weeks since this fluke discovery of the fiery inferno burning before them. Though pleased with this finding some void seems to fill them. The fire is not enough to pass the time. The cavemen begin to communicate with mournful grunts, with varying pitches; their guttural sounds filling the air with musical rhythm. Their next discovery is made: the sounds of music.



Inspired by these sounds, a caveman picks up a dried bone and begins tapping it on a rock in front of him. Others follow along picking up bones; rocks or whatever is near, beating out

noises to accompany their rhythmic gruntings. Movements among the cave people now seem erratic. Jumping and waving their arms, they begin dancing about the fire.

The next morning the cave tribe awake, their senses now enhanced, the colors before them brighter, textures of the elements previously neglected are now stroked and felt in a new light. Stopping to inspect a piece of coal from the fire pit, a caveman strikes the charred object on a rock producing black

markings. Grunting in delight he begins moving the coal over smoother surfaces, rendering the landscape, the animals and his people. And the first cave paintings were born.

Switch to current time today and granted our life forms are slightly intelligent versions of our primitive cousins of two million B.C., but we continue to communion and celebrate music and art. Across the world we may speak different languages or live by different means, these two constants seem to bridge the gap among us. Music and art brings people together and invokes the opportunity to live in the moment and ponder deeper meanings.

Understanding this basic instinct of combining music and art, one summer festival is calling out to artists far and wide to become part of a mass collaboration fusing music and art. **The Big Up Festival**, held this year on **July 28, 29 & 30**, at Sunnyview Farm in Ghent, New York, will be offering artists a chance to showcase their talents to over 4,000 festival-goers from all over the Northeast region. Now in its second year of operation, **The Big Up Festival** features live music art, multi-media installations, artist galleries, site themed sculptures and structures and much more. Not to mention a stellar music lineup including **EOTO (featuring Michael Travis and Jason Hann of the String Cheese Incident)**, **Tipper**, **Digital Tape Machine (featuring Joel Cummins and Kris Myers of Umphrey's McGee)**, **RAQ**, **Big Gigantic**, **Marco Benevento Trio**, **Orchard Lounge**, **Ott**, **Dr. Jah and the Love Prophets**, **The Breakfast**, **Papadosio**, **The Malah**, **Strange Arrangement**, **Kung Fu** and many others.

For more information about The Big Up visit:

[www.thebigup.com](http://www.thebigup.com).

[Words by Franesa Liebich-Pyle, Photo by Jillian Culver]

# COMIN' ATCHA LIVE

BY JOE KOCH

Typically I write about the music happenings in the Western NY area, but occasionally my travels take me to other cities around the country. So wherever I'm headed I always check-out their local music calendar. At the end of April, I was in Nashville for three days and decided to stroll into a small club called *3<sup>rd</sup> and Lindsley* to catch Stephen Kellogg's solo performance.

Sitting on a stool minus his band the Sixers, the quirky singer-songwriter kept the room at bay: wearing his heart on his sleeve singing about falling in love with his wife and the birth of his daughters. His story telling borders on stand-up comedy, so once you've wiped the tear from your eye; you find yourself laughing at a funny story about his brother dancing at a club in Chicago attempting to pick up girls. One thing is for sure, his performances are always intimate. He connects with his fans; you listen to every lyric with intensity. You leave his shows feeling you just became a little closer to the Kellogg family.

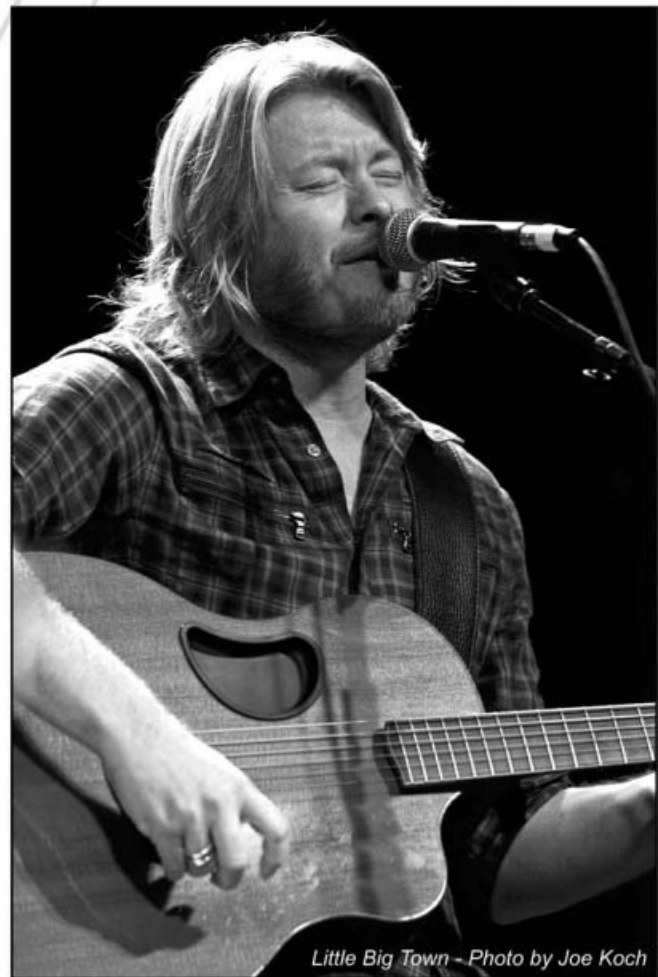
The only other performance we watched was on a Friday night. While walking down Broadway (the main drag with all of the honky-tonk joints,) we came upon five young kids blasting out jams from a doorway on a street corner. Yes, live and electric from the street! They had a battery rigged to power their amps and a speaker for the girl to sing from. With a guitar case open and full of cash from tips, they entertained as if they were on stage playing for thousands of screaming fans. The three tunes that we heard: "Piece of My Heart," "Hound Dog" and "Midnight Train to Georgia" kept us captivated on the sidewalk. Finally, I approached the one guitarist and asked if they had a band name? He replied "No we're not a band. We're just friends jammin', but here's a guitar pick with my info on it." Stamped into the pick read — Tyler Bryant. That name sounds familiar? That's because I photographed him last year at CMAC, he opened for REO Speed Wagon. Tyler is currently on tour with Jeff Beck. A perfect example of how cool the music scene is in Nashville.

Prior to my trip to Nashville, I thought it was only appropriate to take in a country show. On April 20, I hit the Dome Center in Rochester, NY for the Guitars and Stars show put on by 92.5 WBEE, the local country station. I've always heard great feedback about these concerts. The proceeds raised go to The Ronald Mc Donald House. The concept is unique: you get a headliner (Little Big Town,) then you get some other well known acts (Clay Walker, Jerrod Nieman and Craig Campbell,) then get an up and comer who currently has the number one hit on country radio (Thompson Square) and sit them all on the stage together for a stripped down acoustic performance.

LBT kicked the night off with their familiar hit "Little White Church." Next on the mic was Clay then Jerrod, TS2 and Craig rounded out the line-up with "When I Get It." The artists alternated throughout the night each performing crowd favorites. Even though LBT was the headliner; Clay seemed to control the show. I liked when he commended WBEE for putting such a talented line-up together. "To play acoustic, you really have to be able to sing and everyone up here are amazing singers," said Clay. He backed that statement up by



Jerrod Niemann and Craig Campbell - Photo by Joe Koch



Little Big Town - Photo by Joe Koch

belting out his hit song "I Can't Sleep." It was such a powerful vocal performance that he almost blew his cowboy hat right off his head! TS2 seemed to be the most humbled artists on the stage. It was less than a year ago that they were playing at Stages, a local honky-tonk joint on Broadway in Nashville.

Clay stole the show with his unique flare by taking on a blues number called "Steam Roller Blues," which displayed a grittier side to his vocals. One thing is for sure... country fans came out in droves and they came to party! So Jerrod was a favor-

ite as most of his songs seemed to be about girls or alcohol. He also won the crowd over with a tribute to Garth Brooks by singing "Good Ride Cowboy." The night climaxed with Craig singing "Hooked," a short ditty that leads you to believe he's gonna swear in the chorus, "come to find out my baby likes to f... ish all the time." TS2 and LBT both saved their biggest hits for the end — "Kiss Me or Not" and "Boondocks." This show definitely exceeded my expectations.

[Words and Photos by Joe Koch]



Thompson Square - Photo by Joe Koch



Tyler Bryant - Photo by Joe Koch

+ CONCERT PREVIEW/INTERVIEW +

**HANK AND CUPCAKES**

5/30/2011 - BUG JAR - ROCHESTER, NY

Hank and Cupcakes are an electro pop-rock duo originally from Israel. They currently live in New York and are poised on take over the world. Cupcakes is an electrifying front-woman; even though she's positioned behind a drum kit. The drums are front and center: she sings, gyrates and dances without missing a beat. The energy is infectious. The melodies are led by Hank's abilities to make his bass speak 1000 different languages — the master of effects. The songs have the pop qualities of the Eurhythmics, and sometimes build to the angst of early PJ Harvey. But don't put a label on them; their sound is constantly evolving. With their influences ranging from Paul Simon to the Red Hot Chili Peppers... their sound is the future.

I recently had the chance to hang out with the couple. Sometimes when you meet people for the first time, you instantly know they're good people. A little out there, but definitely good people. Cupcakes started the photo-shoot by saying she wanted to jump like a monkey... "Sure, whatever you want," I replied. That led to standing on tables, taking paintings off the wall — whatever they wanted to do, I agreed. After an hour of shooting, the damage was minimal and we got some unique photos. It was a blast!

After the smoke cleared and the dust settled, we sat down to talk about their life as Hank and Cupcakes. This is what they had to say:

**Joe Koch:** How long have the two of you been playing music together?

**Cupcakes:** We've been playing since we were 18. So about 12 years now.

**JK:** As Hank and Cupcakes?

**C:** No. Our first band was a Suzanne Vega cover band called Night Vision.

We rehearsed non-stop. Then we went to all the bars telling them we wanted to play. A bar called Mike's Place was the first to take us up on the offer. We played there once a week for years.

That evolved into an original band for a few years.

Then we started Hank and Cupcakes two years ago.

**JK:** You play the drums and sing, which came first?

**C:** The singing came first.

The drums were accidental. When I was 18 and living in Tel Aviv, I just discovered them one day when going to the beach. There's a beach where every Friday there's a big jam. People just sit around on the rocks playing these African drums as the sun sets. I totally fell in love with it. So I ended up playing drums every night for that summer.

**JK:** You're a front-woman and you play the drums?

**C:** Yes, I'm a sound technician's nightmare. They have to change the whole mic set up, cuz' I play at the front of the stage. I switched to playing left handed just to guarantee that I would use my drums.

**JK:** You're not a typical singing drummer?

**C:** No, I don't sit behind some huge set that's at the back of the



Hank and Cupcakes - Photo

stage. I stand and I'm up front. It allows me to move, and interact with the crowd. I think that contributes to our live energy?

**JK: Previously you've been in bands before, will you be adding more musicians to H and C?**

**H:** No. We don't see that happening. With that said, we really like to collaborate with other musicians. Maybe another bass player, a cello player? I've always dreamed of having a brass section...

**JK: It's amazing how the two of you create such a full sound during a live performance.**

**H:** Yes, we love that. But it's our biggest challenge; trying to duplicate what we do in the studio. We want our fans to feel the same way at shows as they do when listening to our album.

**C:** We're gonna get there. We want people to be blown away by both.

**C:** But like many bands, it's a challenge to capture the energy and the visuals of a live show. It's not easy to take those elements and put them in a box to put in your CD player.

**JK: You currently have an EP. Do you have enough material for an album?**

**H:** We have enough songs for two albums. But, unfortunately we don't have the financial resources to do what we really want to do.

**C:** Hopefully that will change in the near future.

**JK: You guys often get labeled as electro-pop-dance and your current single "Hit" is the epitome of that genre. Is that the direction for H and C?**

**C:** We actually come from the rock n' roll world, but lately we've been experimenting with electro-pop. It starts people dancing when we play live.

It's a pleasure for me, knowing that we're making people move.

So that's kind of moving us in the dance direction.

**H:** We don't have any musical agendas. We do what we like and enjoy it.

**JK: Originally living in Israel, you decided to relocate to NY for a more promising music scene. Did you experience culture shock?**

**C:** We're in a constant state of culture shock when we're sitting still. We need to always be on the go.

**H:** But Brooklyn has been amazing... mind blowing! The fast pace of the city has really opened up our creativity.

**JK: What's a realistic goal for you relative to success?**

**C:** We want it all! No seriously, we want to be on top of the mountain.

We want to sell millions of records, cuz that equals security. That will allow us to keep creating music. We want to be around for a long time.

For more info: [www.hankandcupcakes.com](http://www.hankandcupcakes.com).

[Words and Photo by Joe Koch]

## + BAND PROFILE +

### THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN BAND

BY GRATEFUL KEV

The Little Mountain Band is a climb you may want to make. This amalgam of wonder hails from Buffalo, New York. Formed in the aught, this band is still a developing creature. Anchored by the soulful singing of Aaron Ziolkowski on guitar/vocals this band will take you places only your mind may or may not want to go! But, if you talk to Donovan Cudmore, bassist with an attitude, you will soon find out that there is some articulation within this quintet. Once you hear Rob Enderle on the lead guitar you will feel a kinship that would only be lost in words. While Adam Schmidt plays a tonic on the keyboards, Corey Kertzie lays down a backbeat that makes Ringo envious.

To describe the sound of the Mountain, is quite simple, Love! It is quite apparent that these young people have a kinship and heart that is so sorely lacking today in many bands. These troubadours play for every note and love to please. A list of their songs is an easy task with both classics and many originals. With an influence from Little Feat, Grateful Dead, The Band and so many cool groups, heart is restored to music. Many originals are included at each show and these songs showcase each band member's talents. Their latest effort was assisted and produced by Professor Louie and documented in Take the Stairs. Like many jam-inspired bands, live is the creature you want to tangle with or not. WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THIS GROUP IS THEIR CLOSENESS WITH THEIR AUDIENCE, NOT JUST ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, BUT A MENTAL THOUGHT THAT IS QUITE INTELLECTUAL. Oh well, time is short, and the world so mean, get out and check out one of this band's fun happenings if you can.

If you like hiking, taking a stroll, sauntering along, or just layin' back you will enjoy this band. Upcoming shows during June: 10<sup>th</sup> - The Keg, Rochester, 19<sup>th</sup> - Jam-Boree Ellicottville, 25<sup>th</sup> - Summer Jam Ithaca. Papa Bear - July 8<sup>th</sup>. Hope you will attend, looking forward to meeting new Mountaineers.

[Words by Grateful Kev]